REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-18, 26 and 27 remain active in this case with the non-elected Claims 19-25 being canceled.

At page 2 of the Action, there is an indication that a drawing is required to facilitate understanding of the invention. As the specification provides a description of the spacer that is defined by the claims and, in particular provides, various common shapes that could be used (see for example pages 16-17) and that the Official Action provides no indication as to precisely what is required in the drawing, Applicants believe that this specification is sufficient as originally filed.

The rejection of Claims 1-6, 8, 9-18 and 26-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on the combination of Martin and Jousse is not applicable to the claims because this art does not describe or suggest the claimed arrangement including a coating comprising at least one layer of glass exhibiting electronic conductivity as required in Claim 1 of the present application.

Martin describes a glass spacer intended to keep two flat substrates spaced apart. That spacer is made from a glass matrix which exhibits volume of electronic conductivity (see paragraph 15). According to Martin, advantageously the electronic conduction in the core of the spacer is limited or even eliminated (see paragraph [0030]) which is achieved by melting the glass matrix in an oxidizing atmosphere so that the transition elements present are in their highest oxidization state thereby converting the melted glass into spacers and submitting the spacers to an annealing treatment in a reducing atmosphere so that the faces of the spacers are made conducting. Moreover, the Martin glass spacer obtained is made of glass having a limited or no electronic conductivity in the core and being electronically conducting on its surface. The Martin spacer does not include a coating comprising at least one layer of glass exhibiting electronic conductivity as required in Claim 1 of the present application.

Jousse describes a glass spacer having an approximately polygonal bearing cross section and having a lateral surface which may be covered at least partly with a conductive coating (see paragraph [0061]). This conductive coating can be made of amorphous silicon (alone or doped) with elements such as boron, phosphorous, arsenic or antimony (see paragraph [0062]). In no case, the coating of amorphous silicon doped or not with the above mentioned elements can be considered the same as a glass layer as required in Claim 1 presented here. The conductive coating according to the second variant described in paragraph [0063-0065] of Jousse is similar to the one taught by Martin, in that this coating is obtained by modifying the external surface of the glass spacer. Jousse does not remedy the deficiencies of Martin concerning the absence of a coating comprising at least one layer of glass exhibiting electronic conductivity as required in the claims. Therefore, the claims would not have been obvious in view of the combination of these two references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

To the separate rejection on Claim 7 using the same two Martin and Jousse publications further in view of the publication by Yamazaki. This rejection is to allege that the thickness defined in Claim 7 would have been obvious in view of Yamazaki's description of manufacturing a spacer of glass having a particular coating thickness. However, as Yamazaki does not remedy the deficiency of the Martin and Jousse publications in that the Yamazaki publication combined with Martin and Jousse still do not describe or suggest a coating comprising at least one layer of glass exhibiting electronic conductivity as required in the claims (noting that Claim 7 is dependent on Claim 1 which recites that limitation), Claim 7 would not have been obvious in view of these three publications. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

A Notice of Allowance for all pending claims is also requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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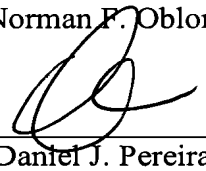

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